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CHRISTIAN MISSIONS:

AN

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

BOSTON YOUNG MEN'S SOCIETY

FOR

DIFFUSING MISSIONARY KNOWLEDGE,

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Owing to circumstances beyond the control of the Society, as well as of the Author, the following Lecture was prepared on short notice, and, indeed, a considerable part of it within only a few hours of its delivery. The writer was therefore unwilling to commit it to the press, without first subjecting it to revision; and in correcting it for publication, he has felt himself at liberty to expand, a little, one or two passages, which, for want of time, were not so fully illustrated as he desired.

LECTURE.

At the beginning of a course of popular lectures entirely novel in its character, the Public may naturally ask for information, as to the grounds on which their attention is thus appealed to; the range of subjects intended to be embraced; and the benefits which the execution of the plan may be expected to confer.

The following lecture being introductory of such a course, my topics have been selected and will be treated, with a view, among other things, to meet inquiries of this sort so far as they may arise on the present occasion.

It is implied, in the very title of the Association, which, this evening, commences its public career, that its founders take a lively interest in the work of Christian Missions; that they think it important to acquire and to diffuse, correct knowledge in regard to them; and that they believe this may be done, in some useful degree, by means of public lectures.

Assuming, (as I am doubtless fully authorized to do,) that such are, in fact, the motives which have led the Young Men of Boston to establish this course of public instruction, I proceed to remark, that the interest they have thus manifested in the general diffusion of Christianity, (the grand purpose of the Missionary Enterprise,) is but a just homage to the object itself, and to their own responsibilities in respect to it.

To say nothing of extensive regions in which a corrupt or nominal Christianity prevails, we perceive, on the

slightest survey of the religious eharaeter of the human family, that a vast majority of its members are wholly ignorant of the Christian faith; that some of this number are yet in a savage state and others only partially eivilized; and that all are sunk in the mire of Heathenism, or bowed beneath the yoke of the Mohammedan imposture.

In many respeets, Mohammedan and Pagan nations may be elassed together; for both experienee most of the evils, individual and soeial, whieh always flow from a false religion.

The number and enormity of these evils, I shall not now attempt to speeify or deseribe.

It is enough to say, that while they vary in degree, they inelude, as a general faet, all the pernieious eonsequenees whieh result from false standards of moral duty; from unnatural soeial and domestie arrangements; from politieal despotism; and from popular ignoranee. Among these may be reekoned falsehood, impurity, and fraud; polygamy, infantieide and the universal debasement of the female sex; absurd notions in seienee; unjust and degrading elassifieations of society; the perpetual servitude of *caste;* slavery in various other forms; unlimited and irresponsible power in rulers, with all the abuses which usually attend the possession of sneh power; the utter absenee of free diseussion, of publie spirit, and of enlightened eharity; frequent and bloody wars, at the pleasure of the sovereign, uneontrolled by public opinion or by any other moral power; and the general prevalenee of error, inhumanity and erime. Not that all these evils are to be found in eonneetion with every form of Heathenism, or in every Mohammedan eountry; nor, that when found, they always exist in equal degree; but that these enormities are the natural fruits of those systems, and abound, to a greater or less extent, wherever they prevail. Look at the unehristianized portions of the globe—even those most favorably eireumstaneed—and see every where exemplified the truth of this statement.

Is this state of things to last forever? Are the temples of obscene and cruel gods always to insult the majesty of Heaven? Shall their altars send up, through slowly revolving cycles, till Time shall be no longer, their polluted incense? Is man, immortal man, forever to be crushed into the dust, by the double pressure of heart-withering Superstition and soul-subduing Tyranny? Shall the devotee forever torture his body for the sins of his soul? The mother forever cast her offspring to the turbid stream? The widow forever ascend the blazing pile? The whole sex, throughout the East, be forever kept in debasing vassalage? Blessed be God, we are not left thus to despair of the human race! There is hope of a brighter and better day. There is a remedy for this moral desolation: a means of recovering the world from its wretchedness and ruin.

Christianity, the best gift of God to man, is equal to this great emergency. She is, emphatically, the parent of civilization; the tamer of the passions; the teacher of kindness and philanthropy; the dispenser of knowledge, liberty, and happiness. She has the promise "of the life that now is," as well as "of that which is to come." It is her glorious mission to diffuse "peace on earth and good will towards men;" to enlighten the ignorant; to relieve the wretched; to raise the down-trodden; to deliver the oppressed; to compose the dissentions of hostile classes; to reconcile contending nations; to bind them together in the bonds of amity and concord; to secure the rights of each and of all; and to spread over the world the genial influences of light and love. Christianity is not only equal to this task; but it is only by bringing beneath her sway the dark corners of the earth, that they can be filled with the like measure of civilization and of happiness, which has been allotted to ourselves. In the universe of God there exists no other remedy for the evils they suffer; no other instrumentality by which they can be led forth to liberty and life.

Does any doubt the perfect adequacy of Christianity to the accomplishment of this end? Review the history of our religion. See it, on the day of Pentecost, "beginning at Jerusalem;" melting into penitence the bigoted and cruel multitude whose hands were yet reeking with its Author's blood; spreading, in despite of the power and malice of its enemies, through Judea and the surrounding provinces; gathering its trophies in the idolatrous cities of Asia; crossing into Greece; confuting the philosophy of Athens; invading Italy; entering the palaces of the Cæsars; flying, with the Roman eagles, to the farthest corners of the earth; and reforming the habits and moulding the polity of nations the most diverse in their origin, circumstances, and laws. See its influence on the character of individuals; how it turns the proud, unsocial Jew into the disinterested lover of mankind; the persecuting Saul into the affectionate apostle; the heathen of Antioch into Christian confessors; the scoffers of Athens—the Epicureans, the Stoics, and the careless votaries of folly and amusement—into penitent believers; the voluptuaries of Corinth into self-denying disciples; the idolaters of Galatia, and Ephesus, and Philippi, and Thessalonica, into saints and martyrs. See it pouring into the bosom of the Roman, the new sentiments of humility in respect to himself, and of brotherhood towards others; suppressing the shows of the gladiator and the crimes of poisoning, infanticide, and self-destruction; abolishing polygamy, slavery, and the parental power of life and death; mitigating the penal law; confining, within just limits, that of divorce; and bringing back to connubial life the blessedness of Eden, by raising woman to the companionship, the duties, and the confidence for which she was designed. See it, in after ages, humanizing the ferocious Briton; softening the Vandal; and teaching mercy to the Goth. See it scattering throughout Europe the seeds of truth, and justice, and humanity, and social order, from which have sprung those various institutions which render Christ-

endom so superior in government, in knowledge, in the arts and charities of life, and in all the elements of individual, domestic, and national happiness, to the most favored portions of the Mohammedan and Pagan world. See it, from age to age, repeating its miracles of mercy, in the transformation and improvement of human character; changing the vulture to a dove, the tiger to a lamb; teaching the revengeful to forgive, and the miser to be liberal; purifying the hearts of the unclean, the hands of the fraudulent, and the lips of the profane; making the proud man humble, and chastening the desires of the ambitious; filling the bosoms of the poor, the friendless, and the afflicted, with resignation, cheerfulness, and hope; and converting, oftentimes, the abandoned drunkard and the profligate debauchee—the very plague-spots of the earth—into ornaments of society and benefactors of mankind.

See it, in our own times, as dispensed by the faithful Missionary, effecting the like results among the heathen both civilized and savage; and this, not merely in respect to isolated individuals, but on a wide and noble scale. Look at those far off isles of the Pacific, long the subject of painful interest as the death place, by cruel hands, of the most distinguished of modern navigators; but now so dear to the heart of American philanthrophy; and see what wonders have there been wrought! It is but twenty-two years since the American Missionaries commenced their labors among the inhabitants of these islands—then almost as much the children of nature, as when first discovered by Capt. Cook. Within this short period, the old idolatry, with all its abominations, has passed away; the language of the nation has been reduced to writing; the whole Bible, and several other works of various extent, have been translated into the native tongue, printed on the spot, and circulated among the people; schools have been established throughout the islands; thousands of the adult population have been taught to read and write; these invaluable attainments have been generally acquired by the youth of

both sexes; useful arts have been introduced; and the chiefs, having learned from the Missionaries, some of the leading principles of our own legislation and jurisprudence, have enacted laws, limiting their former arbitrary power, and protecting private rights through the agency of courts of justice, and of trial by jury. The nation has greatly improved in manners, and in morals; Christian marriage has come in the place of polygamy and other kindred abuses; the Sabbath is generally observed; and the gospel is preached, in nineteen different churches, to the body of the people, no less than twenty-one thousand of whom have been received, at different times, into the communion of the Christian Church; and eighteen thousand of whom are now church members in good standing. What are the physical improvements of the age, splendid as they confessedly are, in comparison with this heavenly achievement? How, too, does it cast into the shade, the most successful schemes of commercial enterprise—the most brilliant results of military power? It was one of the pointed sarcasms of *Swift*, "that he who could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass, to grow where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind, and do more essential service to his country, than the whole race of politicians put together." If there be some basis of truth in this remark, what measure of renown is due to those, who have been the instruments, under Providence, of civilizing a barbarous community; of reclaiming a moral desert; and where before were only known the deadly productions of ignorance and sin, of causing the arts of social life, the knowledge of letters, the institutions of justice and religion, to grow up and to flourish?

Such, as shown by the experience of eighteen hundred years, is the adaptation of Christianity to the necessities of mankind. In every quarter of the globe, and under every sun; in every sphere of life, and among all classes of society —the polished and the barbarous—the high and the low—the rich and the poor—the old and the young—the learn-

ed and the unlearned—this divine religion is equally fitted to the wants of the individual and of society; equally sure, where its doctrines are received, and its precepts are obeyed, to bless the one, and to elevate the other.

Every faithful Missionary is, therefore, a pioneer of civilization, of domestic purity, of equal rights, of social order, of civil liberty.—He carries with him the Bible—that most wonderful of books—soon to be translated into the mother tongue of the people to whom he goes; the Printing Press—that sure pledge that the waters of barbarism shall never again overflow the nation which receives it; the institutions, the science, and the literature of Christendom. Richly laden, above others, with such treasures, are the English and American Missionaries, (and it is to them that Protestant Missions are chiefly intrusted,) for they carry with them our noble language, so rich in works of a religious and moral kind, from whose perennial springs many channels may be opened, for "streams in the desert and waters in the wilderness."

Well, then, may every friend to the progress and well-being of his race—every right minded and reflecting man—take a profound interest in the Missionary Enterprise; for, at the very lowest view which can be taken of it, it must be ranked among the noblest efforts of genuine philanthropy. Especially may this interest be felt by the Young Men of Boston. Descended from a pious ancestry; born in a land of Bibles; reared under Christian institutions; and enjoying, in largest measure, the freedom, knowledge, and refinement, the consolations, and the hopes, of which Christianity is the source; how can they acquit themselves to the Author of these benefits, if they fail to sympathize with the millions of His children—"bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh"—from whom, in His inscrutable wisdom, He has seen fit to withhold these inestimable blessings?

And is it not a strong proof, that man, in his present

condition, is not only far gone from holiness, but from reason, when we see so many intelligent and benevolent men; so many brilliant geniuses; so many accomplished statesmen; so many, in every department of life, whose talents we admire and whose virtues we venerate—utterly indifferent to the propagation of Christianity among the unevangelized portions of the earth?—Many of this class are not insensible of the moral degradation, the social misery, or the political evils of Mohammedan and Pagan nations; they would doubtless rejoice at the diffusion of knowledge, virtue and liberty among them; and yet, in the pride and perverseness of the human understanding, they reject, with contempt, the only means by which this end can be secured; or, amid the duties and schemes and rivalries of active life, the pursuits of literature and science, and the enjoyments of society, they perceive not the claims of this enterprise upon their sympathy—they feel no disposition to help it forward by their patronage, their counsels, or their prayers!

So thought not the sublimest of England's Bards, when, in one of his polemical essays, rising "on seraph wings of exstacy," far above the petty interests of sects and parties, and apostrophizing the Prince of Light, he cries, "Seeing the power of thy grace is not passed away with the primitive times, as fond and faithless men imagine, but thy kingdom is now at hand, and thou standing at the door, come forth out of thy royal chambers, O Prince of all the Kings of the Earth! Put on the visible robes of thy imperial majesty; take up that unlimited sceptre which thy Almighty Father hath bequeathed thee; for now the voice of thy bride calls thee, and all things sigh to be renewed!" So thought not her greater master of harmonious verse, when he condensed the glowing prophecies of Isaiah, into that most beautiful of sacred idyls, which celebrates the advent and the triumphs of Messiah. So thought not the immortal Sir Isaac Newton, who gave his old age to the study of the Sacred Scriptures, "inquiring and searching

diligently," like the seers of old, "what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify, when it testified beforehand, the glory that should follow" his incarnation. So thought not his great contemporary, the virtuous Boyle, who, at his own expense caused the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles to be translated into Malayan, and furnished five hundred copies to the East India Company, to be circulated by them; and who was also one of the founders, and the first Governor, of the Society for Propagating the Gospel among the natives of New England. So thought not, in later times, the gifted Cowper when he sang of

> "——— scenes surpassing fable, and yet true,
> Scenes of accomplished bliss;"

nor the eminent Sir William Jones, nor the enlightened Wilberforce. And so thinks not now, the oldest, perhaps I might say, the greatest, of living poets, who uses the English tongue, the at last appreciated Wordsworth; nor, in a neighboring land, his venerable compeer, the imaginative Chateaubriand, the brilliant De La Martine, or the distinguished Guizot. So reasons not the last great work of Schlegel of Vienna, (an English translation of which has lately issued from the American press,) in which the idea of an universal history—with Christianity as the grand central point, to which all things, prior to its introduction, tended, and from which, since that epoch, all things have gone, and yet go, forth, preparatory to its final triumph—first deduced from the Sacred Scriptures, by your own Edwards, in his History of Redemption, is developed with signal power and beauty. In dwelling on its pages, we can scarcely regret, Protestants though we are, that its author went from the dead Rationalism which has supplanted the living Faith of the Reformers, to a more spiritual though yet erroneous creed; and we cannot but honor his active labors for its propagation, as a fit proof of the depth and sincerity of his religious feeling.

Would to Heaven, that more of the great popular writers of our day and especially of our own language—more of our scientific, and professional, and public men,—could claim communion with this temper, and could see in Christianity, what Milton, and Boyle, and Cowper saw; and could feel as they felt, in prospect of its ultimate diffusion throughout the earth. Byron has described, with terrible sublimity, the sad procession of prodigies, sufferings and horrors which would follow the extinction of natural light, until at length Darkness, sole survivor of the train, should be, herself, the Universe. Oh why did he not remember, that compared to the loss of Christianity, and its attendant luminaries, the blotting out of the stars and even of the sun itself, were but a slight calamity; and that were the former to be extinguished, Sin and Misery asking "no aid" from Hell, would indeed "write Fiend" on every brow, and the moral universe be given up to Darkness, Desolation and Despair.

Would to Heaven, too, that the statesmen, the reformers, the philanthropists, of our age, on both sides of the Atlantic, more generally understood, that neither just systems of government, nor extended means of education, nor great improvements in science, nor high perfection in the arts, nor all combined—important as they are, and much as they deserve the thoughts, and demand the care and reward the labors of men,—are not sufficient, in themselves, to secure national prosperity! That to render these advantages effectual, and to prevent the decay of patriotism, the decline of virtue, and the loss of freedom, there is needed, in addition to every other instrumentality, the enlightening, the restraining, the elevating influence of the Christian faith: That to establish, on a solid foundation, the doctrine of the equality of human rights, and the other principles of civil liberty which rest on this doctrine as their corner stone, that foundation must be laid in the existence of one God—the common Parent of all the nations of the earth—the benevolent Father of even the

humblest of the sons of Adam: That neither Atheism, which deprives man of this glorious parentage; nor Polytheism, which assigns to each nation, or to each fragment of every nation, its peculiar divinity; nor Pantheism, which reduces the Deity to a mere abstraction, and destroys the activity of the individual man; can find, by any process of sound reasoning, a basis for this doctrine: That hence it was, that in all the republics of pagan antiquity, the right of free citizenship was confined to so small a portion of the people; that the masses were held in such degrading servitude; and that the principle of representation was so utterly unknown: That hence also it was, that the congregation of the Mayflower, giving themselves up to the full influence of the sentiment, that they were all, and each, and equally, the children of the Universal Father, discovered those sublime truths in political science, so long hidden from the sages of the old world: That hence also it was, that after the French people had cast off the belief of a Supreme Being, it became, in the nature of things, impossible, that their scheme of democratic liberty should succeed: That the casting off of this belief, was, in their case, not merely the disruption of all those bands of truth and justice and duty which hold Society together; but the overthrow, the engulphing of the only foundation on which the doctrine of equality and of brotherhood can possibly be rested: And that there is no ground to hope for the emancipation of the millions of Africa and Asia, from the thraldom of despotic power, until the pure doctrines of the Christian faith, and its beneficent morality, shall have taken the place of those systems of religious error from which that despotic power claims to be derived, and by which it is nourished and upheld!

Thus far, I have considered the Missionary Enterprise in reference, chiefly, to its general bearings on the secular interests of mankind. But there is another and to the spiritually minded Christian, a much more important and

impressive consideration. The nations of the unevangelized are made up of *individuals*, each of them an immortal, an accountable being, subject, like ourselves, to God's righteous law. Not, indeed, to the precepts written on the tables of stone given to Moses in the mount, and expounded in the Scriptures; but to that original and universal law of which the decalogue is but a republication;—that law which is described by the greatest of Roman orators and by the apostle of the Gentiles, in terms substantially identical,—as the law, written by the finger of God on the hearts of men; proclaimed by the works of His hand; attested to by His vicegerent, Conscience; and confirmed by His providence in the government of the world. Every being who wears our form in Mohammedan and Pagan countries, is guilty like ourselves (though under circumstances less aggravated) of breaking this law; and in like manner with ourselves, needs the forgiveness of his sins, the renovation of his imperfect and polluted nature, and the salvation of his soul. The gospel of Christ is the appointed means of effecting this end; of delivering men from the "corruption that is in the world through lust;" of making them "partakers of the divine nature;" of fitting them for the society of Heaven; and of bringing them, as the end of their faith, and hope, and virtue, into that inheritance of purity and bliss, that "shall never fade away." And because it is so, its divine author taught his disciples daily to *pray* for the coming of his kingdom, and thus, by the most obvious implication daily to *labor* for its coming; and when he ascended from the hill of Olivet, he enjoined it on them, as his last command, that they should "go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, and make disciples of all the nations of the earth."

Those who concur in the foregoing views of the tendencies of Christianity, and especially if they regard it as the only means by which the victims of false religions can be delivered from their sins, and be trained up for

heaven;—who feel that the commission of the first disciples has descended to these times; and that it is equally incumbent on us, as it was on them, either in person, or by the agency of others, to fulfil it to the uttermost;—all such will readily comprehend why it is, that the Young Men of Boston connected with this Society, have felt it to be their privilege, not less than their duty, to take measures for acquiring for themselves, and for diffusing among others, a familiar acquaintance with the history, condition, and prospects of a work so beneficent and godlike.—They have reason to rejoice, that while to the "sightless eyeballs" of many of the wise and great, the learned and the noble, the Missionary Enterprise presents nothing to attract even a casual glance; to them it is given, "in the dew of their youth,"—ere their hearts have been seared by contact with the world, or their hands have lost their aptness for works of love—to see it to be worthy of their most deliberate regards.

In employing the popular lecture for the diffusion of missionary knowledge, the founders of this Society have erected another beacon to adorn our intellectual horizon; one whose beams, I would fain hope, may reach from "New England's rock-bound coast" to the remotest prairies of the West, and by whose blaze other lights may be enkindled. It was fitting that a scheme of instruction so benevolent, should be originated in this ancient metropolis; from which have already gone forth so many streams of illumination and of mercy. Young Men of Boston! By combining with the harmless excitement and healthful recreation of the well-conducted lecture room the sacred lessons of the Missionary Enterprise, you have opened, in this place, a new and ample field of research and reflection; one in which the Muses of History and of Eloquence may delight to range; in which Fancy may cull many a blooming floweret, and Imagination, snatching from the

tree of life the harp of Prophecy, bring from it,

> "——— strains that might create a soul,
> Under the ribs of death."

Here you may study the obligations of the world to Christianity; its adaptation to the condition and necessities of mankind; the duties of Christians to disseminate it to the uttermost parts of the earth; the means by which the work is to be accomplished; the difficulties to be encountered, and the manner in which they are to be overcome. Here you may expatiate on the life and teachings of our Redeemer; the introduction of his kingdom; its advancement in the world; the certainty of its ultimate triumph; and the light, and happiness, and glory, which shall then fill the habitable earth. Here, you may dwell on the story of the first missionaries and martyrs; trace out the journeyings, and recount the labors, perils, sufferings and achievements, of Peter and Paul, and their associates; pursue the blood-stained track of their successors, through the ten imperial persecutions; explore the immense field of missionary labor, traversed by the Nestorians, from the gulf of Persia to the Caspian sea, and eastward through India, to the coasts of Malabar, and the vast regions of China; follow the steps of those who planted the Gospel in Egypt, Nubia, and Abyssinia; study the history of its propagation in Gaul, Britain, and northern Europe; gaze on the strange but brilliant drama of the Crusades, and investigate the consequences, for good and for evil, which resulted from them; mark, in the gloom of the middle ages, the apostolic labors of Waldo and Wickliffe; review the history of the Dominicans, devoted, from their origin, to the double task of preaching the faith, and exterminating the enemies, of Rome; refer to a holier zeal, blended, in the bosom of Columbus, with the love of adventure and the hope of fame, and swaying, as a master passion, the soul of Isabella, the discovery of the new world; rehearse the great deeds of the reformers and their immediate

successors; contemplate the rise, progress, fall, and recent revival, of the Society of Jesus—that remarkable fraternity, in which Missionary zeal and political ambition, love of learning and love of intrigue, open-handed charity and iron-hearted intolerance, insolence and servility, candor and falsehood, have received so many and such varied illustrations; commemorate the celestial piety and active benevolence of Eliot and the Mayhews, of Brainard and Schwartz, and Martyn; render to the Danish and Moravian missions, the homage of grateful reverence; hail the dawn of a new spirit in the Wesleyan Methodists and Baptists of Britain; see it spreading among the Dissenters and Churchmen of that country, and creating the London and other Missionary Societies, and at length, leading to the formation of those mighty auxiliaries, the British Bible and Tract Societies; and returning to our own country, find in the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and its great kindred associations, new and most successful laborers in the work of evangelizing the world.

From these various departments of Missionary effort, embracing a period of eighteen hundred years, and spreading over the remotest portions of the earth, those who are to speak to you, may bring forth treasures new and old; narratives of journeyings and perils and adventures, to win and to repay attention; accounts of the geography, natural history, arts and sciences, institutions, superstitions, rites, ceremonies, and habits, of many and widely different nations; tales of romantic heroism and of patient endurance; examples of genius as well as of faith; comprehensive plans of statesmanship, along with the humblest efforts of piety; memorials of commanding talent and proofs of disinterested love; fitted to instruct, to entertain, and to delight the most intelligent assembly. This, the historian of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire has shown by many instances; though it is deeply to be lamented, that with the vivid coloring and elaborate finish of his

pictures, the infidelity of the artist should be so constantly intermingled. It is shown too, by other writers of this class, in their notices of kindred topics, and especially by your gifted townsman, the author of the History of the United States, in the pages devoted to Eliot and the Mayhews, (one of the gems of his beautiful work,) and more largely in his extended account of the Jesuit Missions in Canada and the West.

The able men, whose names grace your catalogue, will find, in the manifold and diversified subjects which belong to this department of knowledge, abundant materials for their purpose; and as the Missionary efforts of each succeeding year shall add to our existent stores, I see not why annual courses of such lectures may not easily be kept up, provided care be taken to avoid sameness in the choice of subjects, and to present the matter of each lecture in an attractive dress.

The benefits which may be expected from such a course of public instruction, are obvious and manifold.

The acquisition of knowledge, on any subject which has engaged any considerable share of human action, and more particularly if it continue to employ a large number of our contemporaries, is not only a rational, but, to a greater or less extent, a necessary pursuit.

The past history of Christian Missions embraces, as we have seen, a wide range of interesting research; in our own day, the Missionary Enterprise has taken a most important place among the great movements of the age; and it is therefore, to all men, a fit subject of inquiry and reflection.

Knowledge, of any useful kind, repays, at once, the labor spent in acquiring it, by the pleasure its acquisition imparts. But, it is not for this gratification alone, which is, in some respects, a selfish one, that knowledge should be chiefly sought.

"Not enjoyment and not sorrow
Is our being's end and way;
But to ACT that each *to-morrow*
Find us farther than *to-day*."

The knowledge which may be acquired here, will afford much both of enjoyment and of sorrow; enjoyment in the contemplation of the good accomplished, sorrow in reflecting on the wretchedness and ruin which remain to be relieved: but if it be pursued and received in a proper spirit, it will be eminently useful.

The subjects which will be here presented, will withdraw the mind from the grovelling pursuits of every-day life, and thus give it a more elevated tone; they will teach you to feel for the miseries and care for the happiness of others, and thus promote a generous and healthful sensibility; they will rouse you to activity and self-denial, and thus prepare you to become efficient benefactors of mankind.

This Association, if its plan of instruction be successfully carried out, may become an efficient auxiliary in promoting the Enterprise concerning which it proposes to diffuse information; it may give to that enterprise a new and deeper hold on the affections of its friends; it may commend it to the favor of many, who have hitherto regarded it with indifference; it may ally it to its true associates, the cause of Liberty, and the cause of Letters; it may awake the slumbering spirit of some Swartz or Brainard, or Martyn, or Mills, and send him forth to teach the nations of the unevangelized; it may, in these and a thousand other ways, pour out a rich stream of blessing on the world, and aid in promoting the glory of the Highest.

I would urge its members not to faint in their way; not to relax in the good work upon which they have entered. You will sometimes be discouraged, when you reflect on the obstacles which oppose the propagation of the gospel in heathen and Mohammedan countries; but yield

not to despondency, still less, to despair. Remember that He, who has promised to "fill the earth" with his glory, has promised, also, the aid of his spirit for the accomplishment of the work. Remember that "the silver and the gold are his." His, "the cattle on a thousand hills;" His the ministry of nature; and His the government of the nations of the earth: that in His hands are the hearts of men, the councils of Princes and the course of empire; that He makes even "the wrath of man to praise Him;" and that when He pleases, He will employ them all in the accomplishment of his merciful designs. Not that He has need of their assistance, but because He works by appropriate means, and because to His intelligent creatures this employment is a necessary means of discipline and of good, of beneficence or of judgment. Have faith in GOD: faith in his purposes of love to his creatures—faith in his fidelity to his promises. Have faith also in *man:* faith in his vocation to the best and most glorious of destinies, that of becoming a fellow-worker with the Almighty, in the salvation of his species. Cultivate this sacred source of holy motive, of active effort, of living hope. When your faith flags, recur to the lyre of David and the harp of Isaiah; listen to their songs of triumph, and the unbelieving spirit shall be charmed into silence. Connect with the predictions and promises of Scripture, their actual fulfilment, to so large an extent, which has already taken place. If you are sometimes told by sneering Infidelity, that the hundreds of millions of China and Hindostan, and other pagan countries, who bow to-day to their idols "of wood, and of stone, and of silver and of gold," and "to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and to creeping things," and to the images of such things, have done so from their infancy; and that they and their posterity will do so forever; remember who it is that hath said—in reference to the advent of his Son—"the *idols* He shall utterly abolish; and they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord and for the glory of

His majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth." Read in the events of the first three centuries of the Christian era, the incomplete but glorious accomplishment of this promise. Remember that the habitable earth, save one small and isolated part, was then wholly given up to Idolatry; and that the gods of Western Asia, of Greece, and of Rome, the seats of learning and refinement, had then, in their poetical mythology, and in the charms with which imagination and fancy had arrayed it, a hold on the cultivated mind, stronger than any of which existing systems can boast; and that equally with them those exploded superstitions enjoyed the patronage and support of the rulers, and the blind confidence of the people. And yet how swiftly were they swept away; how soon were they "cast to the moles and to the bats!" Before even the Angels' song, announcing the Redeemer's birth, had died away upon the plains of Bethlehem, (such is the glorious vision of Milton's muse) the work is done—the victory accomplished.

"The oracles are dumb,
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
No nightly trance, or breathed spell
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.

In consecrated earth,
And on the holy hearth,
The Lars and Lemures moan with midnight plaint;
In urns, and altars round,
A drear and dying sound
Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;
And the chill marble seems to sweat,
While each peculiar Power foregoes his wonted seat.

Peor and Baälim
Forsake their temples dim,
With that twice-battered God of Palestine;
And mooned Ashtaroth,
Heaven's Queen and Mother both,

Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine;
The Libyc Hammon shrinks his horn,
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn.

And sullen Moloch fled,
Hath left in shadows dread
His burning idol all of blackest hue;
In vain with cymbals' ring
They call the grisly king,
In dismal dance about the furnace blue:
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis haste.

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove or green,
Trampling the unshower'd grass with lowings loud:
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest;
Nought but profoundest hell can be his shroud;
In vain with timbrell'd anthems dark
The sable-stoled sorcerers bear his worshipp'd ark.

He feels from Judah's land
The dreaded Infant's hand,
The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn;
Nor all the gods beside,
Longer dare abide,
Nor Typhon huge ending in snaky twine:
Our Babe, to show his Godhead true,
Can in his swaddling bands control the damned crew."

So too, but with greater majesty and power, when He comes to take to himself his "everlasting dominion," shall it be again. Then shall the gods of modern heathenism be driven from their temples, like "the chaff of the summer threshing floor" or "the dust before the whirlwind," and "the LORD alone be exalted in that day."

Before the coming of our Saviour, there was an evident preparation for that event, in the general peace which shortly preceded it; in new facilities for intercommunication between different parts of the known world; and in other circumstances which marked the signs of that auspicious era, and promoted the rapid propagation of Christianity.

The predictions of holy writ, analogy, and other considerations justify the belief, that the like arrangements may be employed, to facilitate its general diffusion and its final triumph.

As "the time of the end" draws nigh—such is the assurance of the prophet Daniel—"men shall run to and fro, and knowledge be increased." The Protestant Reformation and the new march of mankind in science, in politics, and in religion, which began about the same period, and has ever since continued, was preceded and has been followed, by great discoveries, and by many other events, which may justly be regarded as the partial fulfilment of this prophecy. On the certainty of its complete accomplishment, the illustrious founder of the inductive philosophy grounded the cheering hope, often expressed in his writings, "that proficience in navigation and discoveries may plant, also, an expectation of the further proficience and augmentation of all science." In the advances since made, especially in the increased and constantly increasing means of intercommunication between the various parts of each civilized country, and between different states and continents; and in the influence thus exerted on the social feeling of mankind, and on the diffusion of knowledge throughout the earth; we may see, that already the prediction of the Jewish exile has become history, and the hope of the English philosopher been realized.

In the great national revolutions which have signalized the last fifty years; the movements which are still going on in many parts of the world; the social changes in Mohammedan Europe; the extension of European power (not always it must be confessed, in a justifiable way, though usually with beneficial results) over many parts of Asia and Africa, and to the great islands of the Indian and Southern Oceans; the progress made in North and South America, and above all by our own country during the same period; and the swift march of civilization

wherever it obtains a foothold; he who studies the history of his race in the light of the Bible, cannot but see plain indications, that the authority, institutions and influence of Christendom are soon to overspread the globe, as a necessary preparation for the universal triumph of Christianity itself.

It is delightful to reflect, that all the great social and political changes which are going on in the world, and all the agencies employed by men for the acquisition of Power, the benefit of Commerce, the diffusion of Knowledge, or the advancement of Science, are, in the Providence of God, subservient and tributary to this great end. While ambitious leaders are striving for pre-eminence, and haughty governments waging wars of aggression; while masses of men are agitated by new ideas, and moving forward in the march of freedom; while commercial enterprise is compassing sea and land, and bringing to regions unknown to ancient song, "the wealth of Ormus and of Ind;" while scientific inquirers are pushing their researches into the deepest recesses of matter and of mind, and men of practical skill tasking to the utmost their inventive faculties; while many of the busy millions who are thus playing their respective parts in these various spheres, think little of any interest but their own, and least of all of the interests of God's kingdom; "He who sitteth in the heavens" is using them all, as instruments for the completion of his own grand and beneficent designs. Let it be our highest wish, our most earnest prayer, that He may grant to each of us, the disposition to be willing co-operators, and the ability to render some useful service, in this work of heavenly love!